



# Randall Park Architectural and Historical Survey

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## Survey Purpose

The City of Eau Claire’s comprehensive planning documents show that their goal for historic preservation is to “Identify, protect, and preserve Eau Claire’s resources, which reflect distinctive elements of the City’s cultural, social, economic, political, historical, and architectural heritage in order to enhance the quality of life and foster pride and knowledge about Eau Claire’s past.” Also in the comprehensive plan is Objective 1 of that goal, “Evaluation and Designation: Continue to Survey and evaluate historic and potentially historic resources for designation, recognition, and protection.”

The project provides an opportunity for students to learn research methods while providing a public service to the City of Eau Claire as well as the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office. The records obtained also help reduce the time needed to research properties for Section 106 compliance in the Randall Park neighborhood.

## Survey Methodology

Students select one residential property from the Randall Park Neighborhood at the beginning of the semester. Dr. Mann, in conjunction with the University Archivist, Greg Kocken, provide instruction on the completion of the survey form, methods of research and the sources that are available for completing this project. Students familiarize themselves with the guidelines found in National Register Bulletin 15, “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” before they begin researching their property.

Students become familiar with a variety of sources needed to complete the project. These include Sanborn maps, property tax records, city directories, census records, local business records as well as other records found in the Area Research Center and L.E. Phillips Public Library. Sources are available at several local repositories, including the Eau Claire County Assessor, Eau Claire County Register of Deeds, UW-Eau Claire Archives and Area Research Center, Eau Claire’s L. E. Phillips Public Library and Ancestry.com.

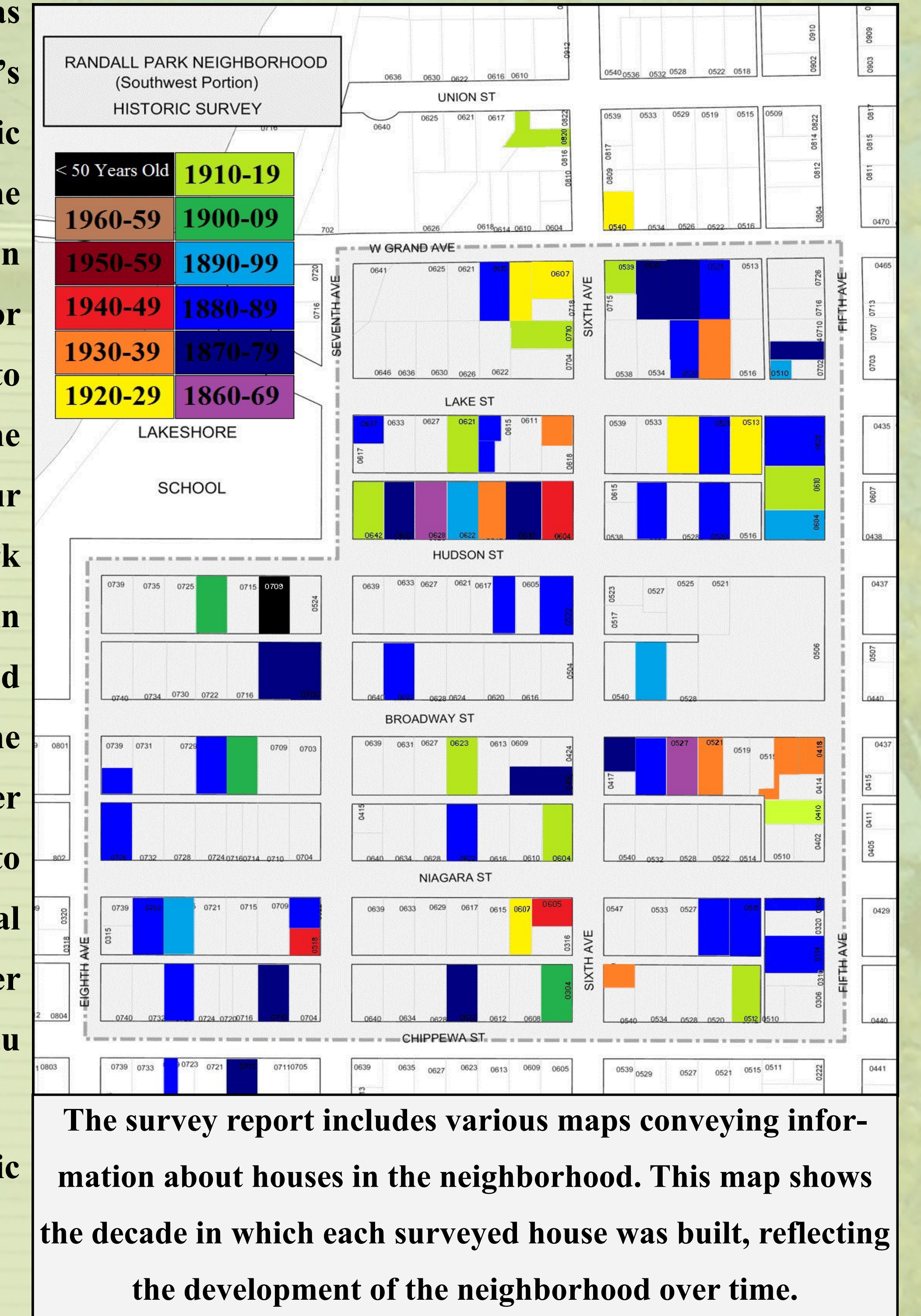
This completed form shows the work done by one student in the project.

<b>1. Identification Section</b>		
Record #: RP0723HJ/DSON	Site Name, Historic: Johnson House	Site Name, Common: Rental Duplex at 723 Hudson Street
Date Recorded: December 6, 2011	Field Recorder: Katie Borowski	
Owner's Name: Tanya Vansse	Owner's Address, Zip Code: 721 Hudson Street, Eau Claire WI, 54703	
<b>Status:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey/Inventory <input type="checkbox"/> National Register <input type="checkbox"/> State Register <input type="checkbox"/> Local Designation <input type="checkbox"/> Determined Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Determined Not Eligible		
<b>2. Location Section</b>		<b>Photography:</b> View Of: <u>South Elevation</u> Date: <u>October 21, 2011</u>
Location Address: 723 Hudson Street		County: Eau Claire Legal Description: LOT 4 BLK 24 ADIN RANDALLS 2ND ADD
<b>3. Description Section:</b>		
Building Type: Residential Duplex	Plan: Simple Plan with irregularities	Number of Stories: 1 Story w/attic
Roof Type: Parallel Side Gables	Roof Materials: Composite Shingles	Cladding: Aluminum siding
Foundation: Concrete	Structural System: Unknown	
Style or Form: Residential Vernacular	Other Buildings on Site?: Yes. Detached Garage.	
<b>Integrity:</b> Intact: _____ Slight: _____ Moderate: _____ Extensive: _____ Changes to plan: _____ X _____ Changes to windows: _____ X _____ Changes to cladding: _____ X _____ Other (specify): _____		
<b>4. Narrative Section:</b> Date of Construction: <u>1901</u> Architect/Engineer/Builder: <u>Unknown</u> <b>Statement of Historical Significance:</b> Prior to the house being built at 723 Hudson Street, the lot changed hands many times, beginning with Adin Randall selling the property in the 1850s. Eventually the land was foreclosed on in 1860 and sold off to various bidders. The house at 723 Hudson Street also had a change of address. From the time it was built, around 1901, until around 1946 the house's address was 721 Hudson Street. In 1946, 723 Hudson Street is listed in the Eau Claire City Directories; this change of address does not show up in the Deeds until 1974. The house at 723 Hudson Street is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, because there have been extensive changes to the cladding of the house, as well as an addition built on to the side of the house. The cladding on the house is aluminum, which, when the house was built, was not used as siding. Aluminum siding was not used on houses until the late 1940s. <sup>1</sup> The changes to the cladding of the house as well as the addition cause the integrity of the house to be damaged. According to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation buildings "...that possess integrity of ...design, setting, materials..." may be considered for the National Register of Historic Places. This house does not possess integrity of materials. The lot that the house sits on was bought by George Withers and his wife near the end of the 1800s; they would eventually sell the property to Gustave Regli for one dollar in 1905. <sup>2</sup> Prior to living at 723 Hudson Street, the Regli family lived in the town of Union. <sup>3</sup> While living at the house on Hudson Street, Gustave worked as a cook for the railroad, unfortunately, neither ancestry.com or the Eau Claire City Directories specified what railroad he worked for, he also lived with many other family members, most of whom were laborers for various businesses in the area. Gustave Regli lived at the house until the 1940s. In 1935 he sold the house to his daughter, Emilie for one dollar. <sup>4</sup> Then in 1940 he and his daughter "convey and warrant to Jacob and Sarah Kusber as joint tenants for 51" half of the house." <sup>5</sup> The Kusbers are listed as living in the house from 1940 to 1944, they had taken out a mortgage to help pay for the house in 1940 from the Eau Claire Mutual Building and Loan Association. In 1944 the Kusbers transferred ownership to Roy and Georgia King. <sup>6</sup> The Kings lived in the house from 1944 to 1950. In 1944 Roy and Georgia took out their own mortgage on the house for \$3,750 from the Eau Claire-Memnonie Federal Savings and Loan Association. <sup>7</sup> Around 1950 they sold the house to Charles and Javeria Johnson, at this time the house was specified to be in the City of Eau Claire and subject to all taxes for that year. <sup>8</sup> In 1954 Javeria Johnson sold the house to her son, Charles Johnson, Jr. for the price of one dollar. Eventually Charles E. Johnson and his wife Lottie would become joint tenants of an undivided half interest of 721 Hudson Street. The other half of the house would be rented by Charles J and Bonnie J Johnson. <sup>9</sup> Charles J Johnson worked for a long period of time at the Consumer's Cooperative Association, first as a clerk, then Assistant Manager, and finally to a Department Manager in the late 1970s to early 1980s. <sup>11</sup> The Consumer's Cooperative Association began in 1935 when a handful of families decided to pool their money and buy two cartons of coal together. This small business would grow to include a two pump gas station in 1936, and in 1938 it changed its name to Consumer's Cooperative Association. <sup>12</sup> The Association would grow to become a huge shopping center, which included a grocery store, gas station, hardware store, and clothing store. In the 1980s with the decline of the economy, the Consumer's Cooperative Association fell on hard times. The owners decided to return to the original business model, which was to have only a gas station and a grocery store. Today the Consumer's Cooperative Association is better known as Mega Foods. <sup>13</sup> It was also around this time that Charles J Johnson lost his job at the Consumer's Cooperative Association and changed jobs to the Indianapolis Trucking Company working as a truck driver. <sup>14</sup> Charles E. and Lottie Mae Johnson lived at the house for twenty plus years. Lottie passed away in April of 1975. Her husband, Charles, continued to live at the house until he died in January of 1982. Charles J and Bonnie J Johnson lived at the house until the 2000s when it was sold in 2006 to its current owner, Tanya Vansse. The Johnson House, for most of its lifetime, has been a home to working class people. There were people working in many of the major industries in this area, such as the railroad, and the tire industry, which is typical for this particular area. Laborers and the working class tended to group together in the same areas. Just a few blocks over, there are the houses of the leaders of industry, business, and the city, the "elite core" was centered around Randall park. <sup>15</sup> The fact that the neighborhood is seemingly segregated by occupation is common in many cities, even today. Working class people can't afford big houses, and most are content living in small houses. This seems to be the case with the residents of the Johnson House, because the majority of the people who lived there stayed for long periods of time, so it appeared that they were content to live in a small house. The fact that this house is a duplex is interesting. Duplexes "contributed to the democratization of home ownership" <sup>16</sup> because it meant that a family could live in one half of the house while renting out the other, thus enabling them to afford to own their own home. People no longer needed to be middle class or upper-class to afford a home. <b>Description of Physical Appearance:</b> This house is fairly nondescript, having no architecturally significant details. It is a relatively compact house; it does not sprawl out or seem to ramble like some large houses tend to do. The Johnson House can be characterized as residential vernacular, having a simple plan with irregularities. The house has a large porch that dominates the front of the building; there is also an addition on the right side of this house. The siding is not original to the house; it was probably sided in wood, which would have still been in good supply in this area, although the house was built after the hey day of the lumbering industry. The prominent features of the house appear to be both the roof and the front porch, because they are the most visible aspects. There is also a detached garage on the property. <b>Footnotes:</b> <sup>1</sup> Eau Claire City Directories, 1956-1980. <sup>2</sup> Lois Barland, <i>The River Flows On</i> (Stevens Point: Worralla Publishing Co., 1965), 284. <sup>3</sup> Mega Foods, <i>Our Company History</i> , <a href="http://www.megafoods.com/AboutUs.aspx">http://www.megafoods.com/AboutUs.aspx</a> (accessed October 10, 2011). <sup>4</sup> Eau Claire City Directories, 1950. <sup>5</sup> Indebert, C. "Social Determinants of Housing in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 1880-1920." Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1993. <sup>6</sup> Ibid. 29.		

The information collected by students is compiled into an ongoing survey report made available to various stakeholders. The survey form itself consists of four sections: identification information, location information, description information and narratives which justify the determination of eligibility.  
Students evaluate National Register eligibility for their property based on the criteria set forth by the National Park Service in National Register Bulletin 15. As part of this process, they evaluate the architectural integrity of the home as well as its potential historic or architectural significance.

## Survey Results

Once completed and graded, a student intern proofreads the submitted forms and the final copies are prepared for submission to the City of Eau Claire’s Landmarks Commission as well as the State of Wisconsin’s Historic Preservation Office. The Landmarks Commission uses the information for their purposes: to encourage the preservation of our remaining landmark properties; to assist in the stabilization and maintenance of the City’s older neighborhoods; and to provide educational activities which foster an appreciation of Eau Claire’s history.  
The State Historic



Preservation Office adds the information to the state’s database of historic properties to assist those requesting information regarding historic properties in the neighborhood. Historians completing Section 106 assessments are able to easily access the information to reduce their research time and other researchers are able to access the complete house histories as needed.

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1\* Svendal Christine  
2\* Langlois J  
3 Williams Lorraine E Mrs 834-5961  
4 Johnson Cindy L 835-7999  
5\* Fisher M  
6 Vacant  
640 Larson Dorothy M Mrs @ 834-8497  
640 1/2 \*Egan Nina  
7TH AV INTERSECTS  
703 Froese Clarence J @ 835-6039  
706 Belden John H @ 832-3812  
708 Vacant  
709 Friedrich Rose E Mrs @ 832-8803  
713 Summe Oscar J @ 835-5485  
713 1/2 Yeager Jean C  
716 Schwartz David E @ 832-2579  
720 No Return  
721 Schrofe Warren E @ 834-5617  
724 Roach James  
729 Krigevald Mary F Mrs @ 835-3868  
730 Klavetter Gerhard A @ 832-0969  
731 Misset Sandra K 835-1553  
731 1/2 Erickson Lucienne A 835-6962  
734 Rice Gertrude A @ 832-6839  
734 1/2 \*Stock Jacque F 834-9169  
739 Hawke Doris A @ 832-1859  
740 Siebenhub Fredk E @ 834-5729  
8TH AV INTERSECTS  
801 Nordrum Thos 834-5197  
801 1/2 Nordrum Bernard 835-7794  
802 Thompson's Used Lumber 832-4609  
809 Gilliland Philip S 834-7045  
818 Boettcher Dan L @ 835-9650  
823 Kulbeck Nytaaa K @ 832-4285

City directories are a great source for the project.  
This is an excerpt from Wright's Eau Claire City Directory published in 1941.